396
H793w

Woman's Rights.

THE UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY

396
H793w

ECONOMICS
SEMINAR

Return this book on or before the
Latest Date stamped below.

University of Illinois Library

APR 23 1958
MAR 14 2000
APR 28 2000

L161—H41

WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

BY

JAMES T. HOSKINS, B.A.,

OF

ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

LONDON: [1869]

LONGMANS, GREEN, READER, AND DYER.

396
H 793w

PREFACE.

The writer publishes this little pamphlet partly in the hope that some of the ideas contained therein may at some future time be carried out, partly because, having more or less carefully explored a vast field of literature, from the nursery rhymes of his childhood to the Ethics and Politics of his early manhood, he feels it a duty to contribute his mite to the world's library, and partly also because he is wont to talk much and think more on what may now be called one of the great questions of the day. The writer does not, like Shelley, defy the critics, but if any one of them should think it worth his while to comment upon these pages, he will read their remarks, hostile or otherwise, with calm pleasure and attention.

372667

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMAN.

The question of Woman's Rights is one that is daily increasing in importance amongst all classes of our population. Despite the conflicting claims of such momentous questions as Reform, Treatment of the Criminal Classes, Protestant Church in Ireland, the Land Tenure in that country, and so forth, there is still a deep feeling in some quarters and a lurking uncomfortable suspicion in others that there is after all something radically unsound in the social and political systems not merely of Great Britain and Ireland, but of all civilized nations in the world; that this unsoundness consists in the exclusion of more than half the human species from many employments and occupations for which they are admirably suited, from (except in very rare instances) all that are called the Liberal professions, and last, though by no means least, from political privileges. It is not the object of the writer to lay before the world a long elaborate treatise, but *first* very briefly to state and criticize some of the leading arguments against what may for convenience be called "Woman's Rights;" *then* to discuss the questions of Female Education, *and* how far women should be admitted to professions and other employments; and *finally* to develope a *scheme* for admitting women to a share in legislation; and at the outset the writer would call especial attention to two great principles which he thinks have in great measure been overlooked by the great men who have dealt with this question; namely, *first*, that though we may gather from the Holy Scripture that women should submit themselves to men, yet that a deferential subordination does not imply complete and

humiliating subjugation in most of the practical concerns of daily life and all legislation. *Secondly*, that whilst we might reasonably object to ALTERING the ancient laws of the constitution, yet that it is highly desirable to *extend* them, for reform and revolution are by no means synonymous terms. The writer would observe too that great political questions of this sort are neither to be settled by a mere building up of positive arguments on one's own side, nor yet by seizing the weak points in those of our opponents and triumphantly refuting them, but by calmly working one's way into other men's theories, endeavouring to grasp their full force and meaning, balancing, not cancelling, the arguments on either side, and so coming to a clear and unprejudiced conclusion. Students of history will remember that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Cecil Lord Burleigh used to put down on a sheet of paper in parallel columns the arguments for and against measures, allowing perhaps to each argument a greater or a less number of marks, and then forming his conclusion and acting accordingly. Be it observed however, parenthentically, that, however advisable this course may be for a writer, especially a young one, yet if a statesman acted thus he would, as a general rule, be sure to fail, for "What is one person's food is another's poison."

Now there are many measures, as for example that of the "Marriage with a deceased wife's sister," for which so much may be said on both sides, that it is difficult to arrive at any fixed determination one way or the other; but with respect to the general principle that throughout the whole of the world's history women have been harshly and unjustly treated, that this wrong must be remedied, and that soon, in the eyes of Liberal politicians, and let us hope many Conservatives also, who have made time for reflection on the subject, there can be but one opinion. The question is, How is it to be done? Now, such is the constitution of the world and the men and women who live in it, that there is hardly anything new under the sun to which a host of objections cannot be raised

at a moment's notice, some of them of course wise and well worth attention, but others of the most weak and trivial nature. I believe it may be set down as a fact in Parliamentary history that had it not been for the weak and shallow arguments *ad hominem* of Mr. Mill's opponents, he would never have had so many supporters, the wonder being not that he had so few on his side, but that there should have been found so large a minority to support a resolution respecting which so little had been said or written; for all parties will agree that no measure of very great importance has ever been embodied in practical legislation until it has been thoroughly well ventilated by essayists and literary men. If the reader will study the chapter in Mr. Mill's Dissertations on "The Enfranchisement of Woman" and that admirable treatise called "The Social and Political Dependence of Woman," he will find there discussed all the leading arguments for throwing open the professions to woman, and for bestowing upon her those political privileges she well may claim as her own.

In glowing and eloquent language worthy of a Castelar or a Gladstone, the reader will see all those flimsy sophistries unveiled which for centuries have imposed upon the credulity of both men and women. He will read too in those pages, rich in historical allusion and marvellous for their depth of thought, how just as the feeble rays of mediævalism relieve us from the horrible darkness of the ancient world, and then in their turn pale before the lighter, the brighter, the holier influences of modern civilization; so, though the position of women has been steadily and gradually improving, yet that more, much more, has yet to be done. He will read too of the fitness of women for politics, and the fitness of politics for women; he will see such arguments as the following on the whole well answered, i.e., that women do not want it, that the cares of maternity and the hardening effect of business and politics upon the character, and the fact that the admission of women to the professions and employments would add to the already excessive pressure in every

branch of professional and lucrative employment, are a sufficient plea for excluding women from such matters and so forth; he will see too how the moderate reformers, "the men who split the path of improvement on all great questions, the men who would retain the old bad principles whilst mitigating their evil consequences," are summarily disposed of. But whilst the writer of this essay keenly sympathizes with the great political thinker who was the first boldly to come forward as woman's champion (in the British Parliament that is to say, for the question was first regularly stirred up in America, and such theorists as Plato, Condorcet, Bentham, and Voltaire, have made Woman's Rights an article of their creed), yet he cannot but think with becoming modesty and profound deference for the opinions of the late member for Westminster, that he has not *yet* gone into the subject with sufficient depth, that there is in short a want of thoroughness in some of his arguments which gives to the reader a vague idea of a something wanting, that despite all these striking theories there are one or two almost insuperable difficulties in the way, which the philosopher has not earnestly grappled with.

In the first place, if not actually stated, it is at all events implied, that the tendency of the modern world is to substitute in all things a just equality for the dominion of the strongest. Now, whilst admitting the gross injustice and the monstrous political tyranny under which that noble sex has groaned in every age and every country, yet surely, just as in a mixed government there must be some force which really predominates over the others, so if we divide the whole human race into two parts, men and women, in the very nature of things one of the two parts must have on the whole greater power, for it is impossible that they should be really equal, because just as in all civilized societies there are gradations of ranks (in some cases highly desirable, in others mean and pernicious), just as even in circles where those who meet together are apparently on an equal footing, yet

through sense of moral or intellectual inferiority, or it may be through a deep sense of favours being conferred and the possibility of their withdrawal, some feel themselves in a sweet dependency on others, so between men and women, one division of the human race must be recognized as being superior to the other, even though both sexes stand towards each other on a footing of nominal equality. So much for the impossibility of *real* equality between men and women. But again, are the two sexes intended by our Divine Creator to be on a footing of nominal equality in all respects? Surely not, for we may beyond all doubt infer, especially from passages in St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, that women are on the whole meant to be satisfied with a position inferior to men, as a compensation for higher privileges which they enjoy, and perhaps it may be added trials from which they are mercifully exempt; but with all due respect to theologians (the expression is not used contemptuously as is sometimes wont to be the case) and thinkers of all kinds who may differ from him, the writer ventures to think that he cannot urge too strongly his view that though women are not intended to have the same direct social and political power as men, yet that there is to be a happy medium, and that they are not to be totally shut out from many employments which seem to have been specially meant for the softer sex, or from a *fair* share in those political privileges which, as a speaker at the Union aptly expressed it, are often possessed by a common clodhopper to whom Liberal and Conservative politics are a matter of profound indifference. Furthermore, on grounds of expediency (i.e. that higher and nobler kind of expediency which alone is worthy of the name) it may be urged that women should by no means have co-extensive political privileges with men for the simple reason that women have on the whole more social privileges; hence a just and proper balance ought to be maintained, so that man would still be in a position of superiority. This may best be shown by figures. At present the social, the political, the

legal, and what for convenience sake may be called the money-getting privileges of man and woman may be said to stand thus, taking the figure 6 as the maximum :—

	MAN.	WOMAN.
Social	5	6
Political ...	6	0
Legal	6	2
Money-getting	6	2

whereas, accordingly to the view of the writer, they ought to be somewhat as follows :—

	MAN.	WOMAN.
Social	5	6
Political ...	6	4
Legal	6	4
Money-getting	6	4

By this it will be seen that whereas at present the sum total of man's privileges amounts to 23, and those of woman to 10 (less than one-half), if justice were done the ratio would be 23 to 18—a position quite sufficient to establish the principle above laid down.

In the second place—Mr. Mill seems to be only half successful in dealing with the objections that the cares of maternity and other social obligations would prevent women from taking an active share in political life, and that even if they did take part in politics this would have a hardening effect upon the character. The truth is that these are the very objections we cannot afford to slur over, and those who do so only weaken the great cause of which they are the champions. We may anticipate what will be more fully argued later on that the mere giving a woman the privilege of voting for a man is not only a half measure that would be productive of no real good, but a policy almost as bad as the evil we wish to cure.

Firstly, then, we must be prepared to concede that amongst all classes the domestic duties and social obligations which women have to fulfil are in the very nature of things so essential and sometimes so numerous that they cannot have

time to take the same active part in political life as men, but for all that it does not follow that they should be debarred from every political privilege, or what perhaps is a still more flagrant wrong, from those employments which are especially suited to their more refined tastes and natural capabilities, but of that anon. Some scheme should be adopted by which a woman might be enabled to take a tolerably active part in politics, and yet at the same time be able to fulfil as well those duties of home life, to discharge which is at once her blessed mission and peculiar privilege—the duties we mean which she owes to her children, her husband, and herself. We should be the last to wish these duties neglected, but still there are some which might very well disappear, as for instance, why do we hear of the odious argument so often repeated, that the husband, when he comes home from his daily work, expects to see his home in good order, his dinner (save the mark) ready, and so forth? Are we to understand by this that a wife should have nothing to do all day but to study her husband's interests, pander to his selfish tastes, and perpetuate his evil inclinations, for really it does come to this, when one considers that woman appears to be born to minister to his wants, and cultivate her own tastes only as far as may be consistent with the will and pleasure of her lord and master! True, in many cases the husband, from excess of respect, romantic delicacy, or noble, though we are bound to add mistaken, generosity, allows his wife to rule the household, and yields himself up almost unconsciously to her personal influence, and hence the existence of that class whom the ignorant many sneer at as henpecked husbands; but how far more frequently have we to face the other side of the picture, when the husband deems himself privileged, under the mask of a soothing manner and adroit flattery, to have his own way in everything. How different in many cases the attitude of the husband from that of the lover! The one still loving and kind yet imperious and selfish; the other so full of feelings of love, delicacy, respect, and fear intermingled that he apparently ruins his own

prospects by too great a consciousness of inferiority. It would not be too much to say that the great reason why the love of courtship and early married life is so often transformed into a sort of mild placid affection, lies in the fact that, with some few brilliant exceptions, women *cannot* take that interest in their husbands' concerns which they would do did they feel that they knew something about politics, that they could give an intelligent vote, that they might in some cases be called upon to sit on a jury, that their opinions were of some value in society, that men were willing to talk with them on what ought to be a subject of interest to all, i. e. the great questions of religious, social, or foreign policy which form the topics of the day. Oh but, says an objector, women would not thank you for constantly talking "shop;" but we would answer, that in the first place minds of a high order do not designate improving subjects of conversation by that unmeaning slang term; and again, though small talk is highly desirable, yet there is a time for everything, and abundant opportunities would be given us for shewing nice tact and a refined discrimination when conversing with the other sex. Thus far we have endeavoured to shew that though woman has more social and domestic duties to perform than man, yet that it is by no means a logical consequence that these duties should take up nearly all her time and engross all her attention; and furthermore, it may be argued that in the scheme shortly to be laid down it will not be necessary for woman, any more than for man, to take any part in politics at all unless she pleases, and we should think none the worse of those, whose tastes lying in other directions, or whose time being occupied with more pressing occupations, preferred to take no interest in political life. All that we contend for is that the many who would take an interest in legislation, nay, who actually do take a vivid interest in what is going on in Parliament (as was testified by the clapping of hands and tapping of parasols after the division on the Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister Bill) should have, under certain conditions, the opportunities

given them both for voting and for themselves being eligible for seats in a legislative chamber; but we anticipate, and must return to our original line of argument.

Mr. Mill, in dealing with the "maternity" argument, says that it does not apply to the vast and ever-increasing portion of single women amongst our population. With due deference to the great thinker we venture to think that it does, for in most cases young single women have many of the softer duties to perform, such as at times taking the place of the mother in superintending the household arrangements, looking after the younger children, or amongst the rich visiting the poor, receiving visitors, and in other ways contributing to the sum of human happiness. We prefer to meet objectors on our own ground, namely, 1st, that these occupations need not take up all their time, absolutely shutting them out from what, for convenience sake, may be called professional and political employments; 2nd, that, as before stated, many of these so-called duties are positively superfluous, as for instance that constant supervision of little household arrangements which is in many cases carried to an absurd pitch, partly through the over anxiety of the mistress of the house, partly through the gross carelessness, the sullen stupidity, or wilful neglect on the part of the great majority of our domestic servants who, though paid as high as many of our educated curates (oh shame!) yet cannot or will not fulfil the simplest duties. It would be foreign to the subject to enquire deeply into this social evil, but they may be briefly ascribed to the following causes: *first*, that inborn aversion to menial occupations, which even people who read the Bible attentively have some difficulty in crushing, but which feeling it is at once a logical absurdity to entertain and a sin to cherish; *secondly*, the want of confidence reposed in servants by their mistresses, and the consequent petty interferences one with the other; *thirdly*, the fact that in many houses no definite hour is allowed to the servants for that regular out-door exercise which at once braces the mind and

renovates the body, and is, in short, indispensable to really good health; *fourthly*, the odious system of giving untrue characters, for if faults be suppressed and only the good points mentioned, can that character be called a true one? Again, if servants know that except in extreme cases their faults will be suppressed, unless influenced by higher motives, as we trust many are, is it likely that they will be particularly anxious about their master's interests or their own good name?

In the third place, Mr. Mill, in answering the objection that if women were allowed to enter professions and other employments, or to take an active part in politics, such a system would have a hardening effect on the female character, seems to us to evade one of the strongest arguments on the other side. He, in the main, contents himself with urging that although this argument might have been applicable in times when, as in the Middle Ages, people had to battle with the opposing wills and headstrong passions of other individuals; yet that now, when we have only to wrestle with the pressure of external circumstances, a pressure which ever in this world is wont at times to cramp the efforts and sour the spirits of men and women alike, yet that now such an idea as that women's dispositions will harden if allowed to work side by side with men, or enter the exciting arena of political life, is opposed to all the peaceful tendencies of the modern world. Mr. Mill also says that it has yet to be proved that what is acknowledged to have a soft and humanizing effect upon man will have precisely the opposite effect upon woman. Now these arguments are very well as far as they go, but they, like others, are, we think, not sufficiently practical, and do not boldly cross swords with the difficulty raised by the alleged hardening effect objection. We contend that if women were eligible to all the professions, that if, as a consequence, they were educated as we are, nay more, if there were not broad and recognized distinctions in the systems of male and female education, if women were constantly talking

politics, nay more, if in any classes of society public opinion expected them to be 'au fait' in all that was going on in Parliament, in each and all of these cases we maintain that their disposition would be hardened, and that such a state of things would not only diminish the sum of human happiness, but be quite contrary to the manifest intentions of our Divine Creator, for in the Old Testament, especially Proverbs xxxi., verse 10 to the end of the chapter, we find portrayed in exquisitely beautiful language the characteristics of a good wife, and, as before stated, we find the same truth revealed to us in the New Testament. We may infer then from the Bible that woman's disposition *is* naturally softer than that of man; again, on moral (and consequently religious grounds, for though practical morality is not identical with religion, yet it is included in it, being a species of which the other is a genus) grounds it may be urged that it would be very wrong to introduce any system tending to harden the character; on medical grounds, too, it may be contended that if we did so, woman would decline in health, and as a consequence would give forth to the world a sickly race of beings, whose powers of mind and body would be enervated and degenerate. The question then is, admitting the necessity for what Lord Brougham calls "a total reconstruction of the law before women can have justice," how far can we go, and it may be added, how far do women think we can go without hardening their character? It is absurd to suppose that because amidst all classes of our population women are to be allowed to earn their daily bread in certain specified employments, and because, to a certain limited extent, those who wish to do so may be privileged to give votes for others, or under certain conditions be themselves privileged to take an active part in legislation, that, therefore, all that is soft and gentle, all that is kind and forgiving, all that is charming and refined, all that is delicately witty and deliciously agreeable will therefore be seen more. Surely the very consciousness of a power that would be within the reach of great numbers of our country-

women would not merely strengthen and expand the mental powers, but refine the feelings and exalt the character of the whole sex; but, says your captious objector, look at the indirect influence which women have had on politics; to this we answer, Yes, and look how in too many cases that indirect influence has been used; witness, for instance, in Queen Anne's reign, the dictatorial insolence of the self-styled "Mrs. Freeman," or the bed-chamber intrigues of Mrs. Masham, of iniquitous memory; witness, again, in French history, the cruel malignity of Catherine de Medici, the venomous counsels of Madame de Chevreuse, or those, still more pernicious, of Madame de Maintenon. Let not the writer be misunderstood; he does not mean to say that sometimes the indirect influence of women has not been productive of much good, but that, on the whole, it has been the cause of still greater evils. Furthermore, the very argument that women indirectly exert great influence for good over the minds of men, serves to show that these are just the very women whose influence ought to be one that is free, honest, and recognized by the country at large, and not that of mere fawning, and cajolery, developed by the backstairs plot, or the drawing-room cabal. It was very justly remarked by a speaker at the Oxford Union Society, that men like women to take a warm interest in their pursuits; and how is it possible that they should do so if they are taught to believe that politics are beyond their sphere, forsooth? It may possibly be urged that it is well that women should not take an interest in the great topics of the day, in order that men may, as it were, come out of themselves and sympathize with women in those lighter pleasures, those sweeter duties which we should be the last to disparage. This argument falls to the ground when we reflect that mutual interest in one another's occupations forms the closest and most endearing bond of union between man and woman.

In the fourth place—Mr. Mill lashes what he calls the "moderate reformers" (already alluded to), who would have

women read the newspapers and study politics up to a certain extent in order that men may find them pleasant and entertaining, good company in short. Now surely Mr. Mill gives a purely arbitrary meaning to the expression "moderate reformer," and by so doing might lead the people to believe, what is not the case, that he is in all matters of policy an advocate for violent and extreme measures. In the first place, we should not for a moment dignify with the title of "moderate reformer" the bipeds who, with detestable egotism, deliberately venture to imply that woman's mission was simply to please man, and not merely to minister to his material wants, but to mould her thoughts in harmony with his, suppressing perhaps all views of her own. In the second place, we hold in extreme respect the "moderate reformer," who, with a deliberate and conscious retention of order in progress, with even a grave respect for precedent and constitutional forms, would at the same time root up every injustice, and, yielding to that irresistable current the 'spirit of the age,' effect a thorough and hearty reform, when felt by the great masses of the nation to be desirable.

We shall now consider very briefly the question of Female Education; and the question, how far women should be eligible for employments or professions; and in so doing it may be observed that the writer does not make any attempt to go deeply into this subject, merely hoping that this outline may possibly give the hint to those authorities whose opinions deservedly carry with them great weight and influence.

CHAPTER II.

FEMALE EDUCATION.

The writer may at once state that he is an advocate for a system of compulsory education; that this system if adopted should extend to *all* classes, for the reason, *first*, that he thinks it would be unfair to make distinctions between the rich and the poor; in other words, to put a pressure upon one part of our population and leave the other parts to work on the voluntary system. *Secondly*, it might so happen that if compulsory education were confined to one class, that class would become proportionately better educated than the others, which stand higher in the social scale, and hence, while too poor to give a vote, much less to be eligible to sit in the Ladies' House (afterwards to be mentioned), they would complain of the incompetency, considering the many opportunities they have for acquiring information, of those who were admitted to vote and otherwise participate in the councils of the nation.

Before laying down the outline of his plan for educating women, the writer would endeavour to clear away some of the objections that may be made at the outset to the principles of compelling people to educate their children. It has been objected by political theorists of the school of Humboldt and Spencer, *first*, that any system of compulsion is hurtful because (*a*) it must tend to depress individuality and produce uniformity, (*b*) it must tend to the culture of the citizen as a subject and not to the development of the individual, (*c*) it must have these effects however much it tries to avoid them. The best comment on such nebulous assumptions is, 1st, to state that there is nothing under the sun to which some objection cannot be brought; 2nd, that while we in some degree admire the intellectual subtlety of such theories we can but smile at

their practical absurdity; 3rd, that even allowing these arguments to have any force, the exception proves the rule, and a system of compulsory education in this instance is to be the exception.

Again it is urged, *secondly*, that if the State tries to do that which it ought not, it will neglect that which it ought to do, just as "a blade which is designed both to shave and to carve will certainly not shave so well as a razor, or carve so well as a carving knife."

This argument, it will be observed, starts upon the assumption that compulsory education comes under the former category, whereas we contend that it should rather be ranked among those duties that the State is bound to fulfil, and therefore the objection may be at once dismissed. *Thirdly*, it is objected that the reforming of the national manners does not come within the end of government, which is to secure protection to the individual; but we would argue by analogy and shew that, though as a rule we hate that protective spirit and those schemes of paternal government so justly condemned by Mr. Buckle, and of which we see types in ancient states, in the evil effects of government patronage of literature in the age of Louis XIV. and in the Russia of the present day, yet that it does not follow that *sometimes* the Government should not step in and interfere when such intervention has much to recommend it, as being manifestly for the benefit of all classes. Moreover, it may be urged that if any more extended system of compulsory education than is at present carried out in the Factory and Mines Extension Acts, &c. were to be mooted, such are the moral influences of constituencies, so much do the great body of our legislators consider themselves to be representatives of their towns or counties rather than of the whole British Empire, the legislation that would follow would occur with the real and not merely the nominal consent of the whole nation.

Again, Mr. Bridges, in his essay on French History, shews the folly of supposing that it is the province of Government

merely to protect the life and property of individuals; and in recommending political theorists to study especially two periods of French History, i. e. the period of Sully's and Henry IV.'s government from 1598 to 1610, and Colbert's administration from 1661 to 1672, he goes on to observe "that the political institutions of a state are to be judged of not absolutely but relatively to the degree of intellectual, moral, and social development which that state may have reached." Now, although any system of compulsory education would have been premature while England was yet struggling for those many liberties which, now nobly won, form the very bulwark of her constitution, yet in these latter days of the 19th century there is no fear lest if a pressure be put upon the people in one respect, a *pressure which is sadly wanted*, that therefore the state will go on to play the part of the bully and the tyrant. Essayists of all kinds have of late years, and with more success, laboured to prove that some sort of state interference in education is absolutely necessary in order to meet the wants of a more highly developed civilization. It has been urged over and over again that if the state interferes by poor laws to prevent people from being starved, *à fortiori* should it protect a person's higher nature from starvation; again, that "prevention is better than cure," that it is better to build more schools than gaols; that it is better to train the twig to grow straight than to bend it back when already crooked; and again, that the law deals with all people as if they were free agents alike, but that if the state allows people to grow up in such ignorance that they may be scarcely said to be rational agents, then the maxim 'equality before law,' instead of being the perfection of justice becomes the perfection of injustice; and furthermore, that if you give men a share of political influence it is the State's duty to see that they do not abuse it.

Thus much for the principle of compulsory education among all classes of our population male and female, and the writer will now dismiss this part of the subject with the hope that one day we may realize the words of the poet Wordsworth.*

Admitting, then, that a system of compulsory education is very desirable for the young of both sexes, and leaving out of the question all schemes for educating (using the word in the technical sense) boys, we venture to propose an outline of three schemes for educating the lower, the middle, and the upper classes respectively; and if it be objected, why lay down any elaborate plans for educating girls, we reply that we do so on the assumption that on the one hand the time will come when women will be eligible for many more employments than they are now, and again, that they will be allowed under certain conditions to take an active part in politics. Without attempting to shew where the lower converge into the middle classes, or where again the middle classes tread closely on the frontier line of the upper circles of society, we would briefly consider in each case:—

1. How far the state should contribute to any scholastic system.

2. How far the state should exercise a wholesome and salutary supervision.

3. How teachers should be appointed.

4. What branches of knowledge should be taught.

5. What prizes or other inducements to study should be held out.

6. The question of school terms, &c.

* "Oh for the coming of that glorious time,
When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth,
And best protection, this imperial realm,
While she exacts allegiance, shall admit
An obligation on her part to *teach*
Those who are born to serve her and obey."

LOWER CLASSES.

1. The State, if need be, ought to provide entirely for the instruction of its poorest citizens.

2. The author ventures to hint that ladies' committees of the various towns and districts of the United Kingdom should be paid and empowered by Government to control, under certain limitations, schools within their respective districts; that they be authorized to give a monthly account of the different schools established in those districts to some central power, say the Sheriff of the County, who in his turn would at a certain specified time have to send up to the Ladies' House (we anticipate a little), a true and accurate report of the educational progress of the girls residing in the County over which he is High Sheriff; that penalties be inflicted upon any committee of ladies or Sheriff who, either through wilful neglect or gross carelessness, fail to perform these or any other duties that may be assigned to them; that it be competent for any one to bring an action against a ladies' committee or Sheriff whom he suspects to have neglected their duties; but that the party thus bringing the action and losing it shall be obliged to pay all the costs. The High Sheriff should nominate the Ladies' Committees; and care should be taken that they are conscientious and honourable women, and that they are peculiarly fitted for this sort of work.

3. The plan recently proposed by Senor Ruiz Zorilla in the Spanish Cortes, i.e. that professors and teachers should be appointed by competitive examination, is open to the objection that for such responsible posts as these other than mere intellectual qualifications are absolutely indispensable. For instance, though not necessarily a member of the Church of England, we think that every teacher (who must always be a woman) should be *bonâ fide* imbued with certain religious

principles, which may be called fundamental; that the teacher should sign a declaration to the effect that she believes such a proportion as shall be decided by the State to be sufficient, whilst she be left perfectly at liberty to think on other points as she pleases, provided she carefully abstains from even mentioning to the children any of what for convenience sake may be called the doubtful points of Holy Writ. Again, a teacher should be gifted with certain moral and social qualifications, which cannot be brought out in a competitive examination; and furthermore, we are averse to the whole system of *competitive* examinations amongst women as tending to harden the character and injure the health. The plan, then, that we propose is that all teachers in girls' schools should be nominated by the Sheriff of the County or the magistrates of the various districts; that only a limited number of persons can be nominated as vacancies arise, say five or six to each post that becomes vacant; that these nominees be subject to a test examination, varying in difficulty according to what they will be required to teach; that this examination be conducted by a district committee of five ladies nominated by the Sheriff of the County; that out of the successful candidates the Ladies' Committee may elect whomsoever they think fit; that the voting be by ballot; that the salaries of teachers be definitely fixed; that no salaries be less than £50 a year; and lastly, that teachers be removable at the pleasure of the Ladies' Committee.

4. We think that reading, writing, and certain portions of the Holy Scriptures ought to be taught to all the scholars, no matter what the religious belief of the parents; and if it be objected that from a Church of England point of view too low a standard might be aimed at, we reply, that, admitting the differences of religious belief that exist and always will exist in the world, a system of religious education should be hit upon so as to satisfy the advocates of each particular belief, provided that certain fundamentals were rigidly maintained. A conscience clause should be strictly enforced, by which the

children of Dissenters would be exempt from attending the Church of England on the written request of the parent. If, after the Government had devised some liberal and tolerant measure, by which the grand living truths of Christianity would be taught to all children alike, parents still object, then the writer maintains that it is quite consistent with Liberal theories of religious policy to disregard all blind unreasoning clamours; especially as, if worst come to the worst, the child can after a certain time, or in day schools, while the educational course is actually going on, unlearn all the good that it has been taught; but if it does so that is not the fault of the State, whose province should be not to force but to mould the consciences of its younger citizens—not to penetrate the recesses of private life, but to lay down certain general enactments which, framed in a spirit of unflinching firmness tempered by lenient charity and loving forbearance, can alone serve as the foundation for a true Christian commonwealth. By this, or a similar system, the young of both sexes would have opportunities for receiving sound religious instruction, whilst the State would not step beyond the limits of a just and salutary intervention. Thus it will be seen that the writer is distinctly and emphatically opposed to all systems of purely secular education, partly because they shirk the difficulty of contriving a scheme of universal comprehensiveness, so as to include the children of all classes of religionists, partly because, however much it may be argued that moral teaching is good as far as it goes, and that on this point at any rate all parties agree, yet we maintain that, whilst true morals and religion are in some degree synonymous terms, yet a sham morality not based upon sincere religious conviction is sure to break down.

So far then we think that the three subjects already mentioned, i.e. the Holy Scriptures, reading, and writing, should be taught as essentials; whilst, as an extra, the children might be taught needle work, or some other handicraft occupation, but only one, for we think it is a great mistake to aim

at teaching too much. This handicraft occupation should be selected for the child by the parents until she has completed her 12th year. When once selected it should not be changed, except under very peculiar circumstances, until the child has completed her 12th year, when she herself should be allowed either to continue that same employment or to select something else. This plan, we think, would at once promote habits of regularity and order, at the same time giving to the child that fair freedom of choice which is so very desirable.

5. We think that the distribution of prizes should be left entirely to the discretion of teachers, though necessarily only a limited number would be given away in the course of the year. We have already stated our objections to competition in girls' schools, and we may add that the words education and instruction do not mean exactly the same thing, for the one term is generic, the other specific. In other words, just as religion includes the only morality worthy of the name, so education includes instruction. The child may be said to be instructed when its faculties have been employed in the acquiring a certain amount of knowledge, whether religious, intellectual, or technical; but unless the religious truths conveyed exert their influence over the heart and conscience; unless the knowledge acquired in some way teaches them the lessons of obedience, industry, forethought, self-reliance, and self-sacrifice; unless the industrial art they have been practising sows the seed of orderly and economical habits, then the child, though instructed, cannot be said to be educated. We think that the general principles enumerated would to a great extent secure this thorough education; and what is more closely connected with this fifth heading, we think that teachers should, in distributing prizes, take into consideration not merely the amount of knowledge brought out in test examinations, but the general behaviour and conduct of the pupils. It may be objected to this argument that were rewards to be apportioned on this principle, we might be encouraging as well a system of undue espionage on the part of teachers

as a sneaking subserviency on the part of the taught; but we think this objection will not hold good, for the simple reasons that teachers have many opportunities of quietly observing traits of character without fostering a lax morality; and again, that women's perceptive faculties are acknowledged to be superior to those of man; and it must be remembered that in this outline we are only attempting to deal with the subject of *female* education.

6. We think that as a general rule every child from 8 to 12 years old should attend day shools for 3 hours a day during the week, except during vacations, which should be made as short as possible amongst the Lower Classes considering that their school time would not be so long as amongst the higher grades of Society. Again, when the child has completed her twelfth year, she should attend a day or night school for 4 hours a week until she has completed her fifteenth year, when as far as her education is concerned she would cease to come under the control of the State. Thus, when the child has reached what may be called the second stage of her scholastic career, she will have ample opportunities on the one hand for helping her parents, or earning money for her own and their subsistence; and again, assuming that by this time she can read and write accurately, opportunities will be afforded to her not merely for keeping up but for extending her knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and the one industrial occupation which has been selected for her after mature and thoughtful consideration, or which she herself has chosen after the completion of her 12th year. We must now dismiss the problem of education among the Lower Classes, and see how far the principles laid down are applicable when we come to deal with the

MIDDLE CLASSES.

1. The State should provide so far and no furthur as is consistent with the eternal principles of justice and expediency.

In other words, these schools should be as far as possible self-supporting, whilst Government supplies deficiencies.

The general principles laid down under headings 2 and 3 in the preceding section are equally applicable here.

4. Besides reading, writing, and a more advanced study of the Holy Scriptures and industrial occupations, only one of which is to be selected by the parent or child as previously stated, a clear and rational study of one only of the newspapers might be put down as an essential. Where there are so many high class papers it were invidious to mention names, but perhaps "Public Opinion" would be most adapted to our purpose, for this journal contains the best extracts of the principal daily papers, and thus young girls who wished to qualify themselves for giving a vote would be enabled to see both sides of the leading questions of the day, and as they grew older might gradually incline towards Liberalism or Conservatism as the case might be. It should be a generally understood thing that any teacher who tried to biass the mind of a child one way or the other, should be reported to the Ladies' Committee, and if the offence were repeated summarily dismissed. From what we have said it may be inferred that, though the child herself may develop, as indeed we would wish her to do, certainly strongly-marked political leanings, yet we think she should only be *required* to learn the bare facts, and those too the very simplest, until she has completed her 12th year. Teachers should select certain events as essential to be learnt, e. g. the chief provisions of the Irish Church Bill, the principle clauses deing discussed by the Spanish Cortes, the principal pictures just produced in the Royal Academy, and so forth. Throughout the whole of her educational career, the child would have to study one newspaper only to be selected for her by her parents, though after the completion of her 12th year she might, in conformity with the principle previously laid down, be at liberty to choose her own paper, which she must, unless under very special circumstances, keep to until she ceases to be amenable to state jurisdiction.

5. The principles laid down under this heading in the previous section are also applicable to middle class education, except that as the schools would be in great measure self-supporting, the prizes should be more valuable. We would suggest, too, that in lower and middle class schools the prizes should be useful rather than ornamental.

6. As a general rule, the following regulations might be enforced, that every child from 8 to 12 years old should be sent either to day schools or boarding schools; that in the first case they should attend school four hours a day during the week, except during vacations, which latter should be fixed by the teachers, subject to the approbation of the Ladies' Committee of the town or district; that the Ladies' Committee should have the power to alter the vacations of, and in other respect control, boarding schools; that when the child has completed her 12th year, she should attend a day or night school for four hours a week, until she has completed her 16th year.

We must now consider the question of education among the

UPPER CLASSES

1. These should be almost, if not entirely, self-supporting.

2, 3, and 4. The same principles laid down with reference to the lower and middle classes are in the main applicable here; except that we would relieve parents from the necessity of sending their girls to school, if they produced at stated periods clear proof that their children had been instructed by a governess at home. In all cases of home-instruction, the girl should still be subject to state control, until, having completed her 17th year, she had passed an examination in the usual school subjects, and received a certificate from the Committee of Ladies. We would divide schools into two classes, i. e. elementary and advanced. In *elementary* schools, the Holy Scriptures, reading, writing, needle-work, and the

principal facts of some one leading newspaper would be the subjects for study; whilst, after passing an entrance examination, the child would in *advanced* schools receive instruction in the Holy Scriptures, writing, needle-work, and the more important facts of some one newspaper as essentials, and also in *one* of the following as indispensable, i. e. the piano, the organ, or some other recognized musical instrument, painting and drawing, elocution, English History from George I. to 1858, or Outlines of Literary History; and again, on the written request of the parents, subject to the consent of the child herself, she might be taught *two* of these subjects held to be indispensable; or, in addition to the one extra indispensable, any one of the following:—i. e. French, German, Italian, Geography, a deeper study of the newspapers, or an approved work (or portions of) on Political Philosophy, such as 'The English Constitution,' 'Lives of Lord Brougham and Lord Lyndhurst,' or, better still, the Essays read before the Social Science Association in the preceding year. If this scheme were carried out, a child would during the whole of her educational course study five or six subjects only, while she would have almost unlimited freedom of selection. If it be objected that such a system would have a tendency to narrow the mind, we reply that it is much better to have a thorough knowledge of a few subjects than to have a smattering of a great many. Whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well; and we think that one great aim of all educational systems should be to *specialize* study.

5. We need not repeat what we have said before, but would merely hint that now the prizes should combine ornament with utility.

6. Except in cases where certificates of home instruction have been submitted to the approval of and signed by the Committee of Ladies, we think that girls should attend elementary day or boarding schools from the ages of 8 to 12, and from the end of their 12th year to the completion of the 17th they should go to advanced schools (day or boarding),

or remain at home under the supervision of a governess. The vacations might spread over three months of the year, and we should not be averse to the elder girls sometimes going out into society under the protection of their parents, guardians, or other chaperones; we strongly discourage the reading of trashy sensational novels, or, what would be almost as bad, the dabbling with any studies they are not prosecuting at school. True to one of the principles laid down, and keenly alive to the necessity of relieving the mind as well as the body, we would recommend that parents should allow their children during vacations to select for themselves *one* approved author of works of fiction, and *one* of the best poets for private perusal or recitation. No harm would be done by a very limited reading of an author like Bulwer Lytton, James, Mayne Reid, or Disraeli, while the habit of reciting aloud passages from Shakspeare, or Göethe (translated by Anna Swanwick), would not only purify the thoughts and enrich the fancy, but develop and strengthen those virtues of enthusiasm, benignity, courtesy, and generosity which should be, nay in many cases are, the especial attributes of our fair islanders.

The following general principles may be laid down with reference to a

COLLEGIATE SYSTEM,

in addition to those suggested under previous headings.

1st. On the completion of the 17th year, the girl, if her parents could induce her to do so, might go to College for 3 years.

2nd. The Ladies' Committees should control as well the collegiate as the scholastic system.

3rd. The salaries of teachers should range from 300 to 1000 a year. (The salaries of teachers of middle and upper class schools ranging respectively from 100 to 400 and 200 to 800 a year.)

4th. There should be an entrance examination in the subjects studied at school.

5th. The Holy Scriptures, needle work, and an intelligent study of some one leading newspaper should be indispensable, while one, two, or three of the subjects already enumerated might be selected by the pupil in addition.

6th. Prizes might be given at the discretion of the teacher. Both general and special examinations conducted by the teachers should take place three times a year. The general examinations would be in those three subjects set down as indispensable, and the successful candidate would have some distinct but minor degree conferred upon her publicly by the President of the Ladies' Committee. (No one should be eligible for what may be called the first public examination until she has completed her first term of residence.) She might then either leave the College or stay on and study one, two, or three of the other branches of knowledge, setting aside (except in the privacy of her own chamber) the subjects in which she has already graduated. After she has kept 3 terms, and before the completion of the 12th term she might present herself for examination in each of her special subjects; and if she passes a tolerably severe test examination the Ladies' Committee might have power publicly to confer upon her an honourable degree in one or more of the branches she has successfully mastered. In no case will a candidate be allowed to present herself for special examinations more than four times.

7th. The College itself, as Miss Emily Davies has wisely suggested, in a paper read before the Social Science Association in 1868, should be situated in the country; each student should have a small private sitting room; and the College year should occupy about six months.

Thus far we have endeavoured to give a few brief hints for a plan of compulsory female education; and we would observe in addition—

1st. That many of these suggestions are applicable to a voluntary system.

2nd. That though we may have made no mention of out-door recreation, yet we do so now in a separate paragraph, for surely in these days when the necessity of some regular physical education is so keenly felt, any system of which this did not form a part would be grossly incomplete. To begin, then, we think that all girls should go out of doors twice in the course of the day, and that they should certainly be not less than 2 hours a day in the open air. A ten minutes' airing before breakfast is highly desirable. In all schools a play-ground of greater or less dimensions should belong to the establishment, and the nearer the better; and during play hours the girls should be entirely free from the supervision of teachers. In upper class schools, on some part of the play-ground a croquet lawn should be made, and those who wished to play might take it in turns. Too much importance cannot be attached to this charming game, for setting aside those many opportunities for finesse, tact, and we were nearly adding innocent love-making, but happily remember that the ruder sex are supposed to be conspicuous by their absence, croquet, whilst it is a capital out-door exercise for the fair, tends to bring out into strong relief the qualities of good temper, patience, self-denial, perseverance, and that shrewd strategic skill which, when backed by a quick eye and a steady hand, often snatches a game out of the fire when all is apparently lost. What is the reason why some young ladies are full of life, health, and good spirits, while others move about with a sort of pitiable, listless, languor, as though "death they ardently desired and life abhorred?" Delicacy of constitution, you say, makes the difference,—yes, but what causes the delicacy? The writer does not hesitate to affirm that, in the great majority of instances, the bad health some ladies suffer from (and indeed these remarks are applicable to the young of both sexes) is solely owing to the neglect of those proper precautions which are imperatively demanded by the laws of

nature, for in common with other great prizes of life, which cannot be won without conscious and oft repeated efforts, so good health cannot be retained without, but may in most cases be *recovered* by a system of careful diet, plenty of fresh air, gentle study, and a moderate rational participation in the pleasures of social intercourse. The writer notices that for some little time a marked change has been gradually working its way into our social system; that "Ideas of the Day" on Health are by no means uncommon, that air and exercise *are* beginning to be thought of other than as mere amusements, that even Cockle the great Cockle is on the wane, that homœopathy and Turkish Baths are rapidly superseding the old routine of tonics and druggism!

3rd. Our aim in developing this, or a similar system of education, is partly to strengthen the position of Woman throughout the country by in great measure committing to her care the education of young girls; partly also to make young people fit for those professions to which we propose that they should be eligible in after life.

If then any of our readers have followed us thus far, we invite them to a perusal of the following Chapter:—

CHAPTER III.

HOW FAR WOMEN SHOULD BE ELIGIBLE FOR PROFESSIONS AND PUBLIC EMPLOYMENTS.

At the outset we are met by the oft-repeated objections that if women were allowed to vie with men in the various branches of professional and lucrative employment, the pressure of competition already severe would become almost intolerable; but this argument, not to mention its gross selfishness, is puerile; for, as has been shown over and over again by political economists, the average earnings of man and wife would be the same, whilst the one would often be raised from the position of an upper servant to that of a junior partner. If it be objected that it should be the privilege and glory of the husband to maintain his wife and young children; and whilst so doing to shield them as far as possible from "the low realities and paltry cares" of the world, we reply, *first*, that, assuming one of our own sex to be the objector, there is a very refined vein of egotism in the argument; for if the husband be the sole bread winner, and feel in consequence a happy glow of responsibility, and tenderness towards her who is dependant upon him for support, he is thus happier than the wife, who may also wish to share his sensations, and contribute her share, though a smaller one, to the fund necessary to meet their common wants. This argument is well brought out by Aristotle, who, when urging the necessity of equality amongst friends, truly remarks that the benefactor is a happier man than the person benefacted. Again, *second*, we say look at the social condition of some of our lower classes, amongst whom we often see husbands spending not only their own, but even their wives', earnings in drinking brandy and

water and other villainous concoctions. True that in the upper circles of society the present social dependance of women appears to be satisfactory, but are we quite sure that women, especially young ones, when they are alone do not desire a thorough change of public thought on this question? However this may be, the writer is certain that in the middle and lower classes the social, legal, and political inequalities of women are severely felt. What says that large proportion of single women amongst our population, who, often gifted with moderate talents and endued with great capabilities for work, still feel that, except the miserable ill-paid drudgery of the governess, no employment whatever is open to them? If it be urged, why do they not go upon the stage or give public concerts, we reply that these careers require peculiar qualifications, that they are not sufficient to meet the many wants of our country-women, and that unless a person rapidly rises to the top of the profession, such is the present state of public opinion, that she will be considered to have lowered herself in the eyes of the world by becoming an actress or professional singer. In rapidly glancing at what for convenience sake we will call the various professions which should be open to women, we would again impress upon our readers one of the great principles underlying all our arguments, i. e. that although it is desirable that the greater burdens of life should be borne by us who are more fitted to sustain them than the weaker sex—that though we should reap a larger proportion of the emoluments, and feel that in consequence we have in some measure to shield and protect those who have honoured us by allowing us to marry them—yet that it does not follow that therefore our wives are to have no sweet sense of responsibility, no opportunities for earning money, or no sense of a sweet mutual inter-dependence. We say moreover, that, allowing it to be a monstrous shame that our poor single women cannot get employment, if professions are to be thrown open to them, we cannot deny to married women the same privileges, for however attractive may be the state of single

blessedness, who will venture to affirm that married women are not as it were the representatives of their class?

We are not prepared to assert that women should be admitted to any branches of the Church. The Ladies of England, let us be thankful to say, are doing a great deal of voluntary work by visiting the poor, forming themselves into regular organized associations for the purpose of reading the Bible in hospitals, getting up subscriptions and personally superintending convalescent homes, orphanages, and so forth. This we consider to be a remarkable sign of the times, that women no longer shut themselves up in their own thoughts, but take a delight in doing good to all around them—that, conscious of their own superior morality, their enormous influence for good over the minds of men, and their own sterling worth, they deem it their duty no longer to withhold from us their kindly help, even though we with curious stolidity or heartless ingratitude refuse to give them much encouragement.

Again, we think that the Bar is one of those professions that might be confined to men, and the same may be said of the Army and Navy, though it must ever be remembered that history gives us instances of women who have not only fought most gallantly, but displayed remarkable skill in foiling the plans of the enemy. Witness the daring exploits of Joan of Arc, the prompt energy of Donna Maria di Pacheco at the siege of Toledo, the unabated ardour of Henrietta, the courageous efforts of the Duchess de Luxembourg, Madame de Montpensier, and other heroines of the Fronde. Witness the untiring zeal of Jean de Montfort or the Countess of Derby; and again, even in the 19th century, see what a noble example has been set to posterity by the high-souled enthusiasm of "Belle Boyd," or the calmer heroism of Florence Nightingale in the hospitals of Scutari. Again, we are told by Mr. Whately Cooke Taylor "that at the present moment there exist in two out of the five continents of the world trained bands of female warriors."

In the profession of Medicine Miss Garrett, as everyone knows, has greatly distinguished herself. Other ladies, we believe, have in foreign countries had diplomas conferred upon them, and we think it is very desirable that the medical profession should be freely eligible to such women as are deemed by proper authorities to be fitted for it. The following are our chief reasons:—1st. Women are very quick with their fingers, they have sharp eyes and steady hands, and thus are eminently qualified for performing delicate and difficult operations. 2nd. In medicine, as in other things, the tendency of modern thought is to substitute the natural for the artificial; and as the writer believes that the more violent remedies are being rapidly superseded by simpler methods of cure, so woman's abundant stock of common sense would be of immense service in this profession. 3rd. However courteous many physicians are, yet men are not, and never can be, so bland and affable, so soothing and sympathizing as women. 4th. If it be objected that the young of both sexes would be too often together, and thus hasty marriages might ensue, we reply that we have too good an opinion of both men and women to suppose that the number of ill-assorted unions would be multiplied by an influx of charming female doctors; and again, it does not follow that because a young lady receives a fee for healing the external ailments of her patient, that therefore she is bound to cure the diseases of the heart.

We think that employments in shops, banks, the lighter departments in legal offices and commercial houses, should from this time forth be thrown open to men and women in equal proportions. Especially should this be the case with regard to all posts in the English Civil Service. Though retaining the competitive system as far as men are concerned, we would render woman eligible by a mixed system of test examination, and, as we previously hinted, selection of the successful candidates for qualifications other than those merely intellectual.

We think that the Musical and Dramatical career should

be thrown open to ladies of the higher classes as well as women in lower grades of society. Why should it not be the rule at some theatres that no lady or gentleman might act any part, however subordinate, until he or she either passed a searching examination in two of the more advanced subjects mentioned in the last chapter under the heading Collegiate System, or else produced a certificate of having taken at least two of the more distinguished degrees? If government took this matter into consideration, we think that grand opportunities would be given to some of the brightest ornaments of modern society, for at once pleasing others and making a right and proper use of the talents conferred upon them by our Creator. The example thus set by the élite of the profession would make itself felt in minor theatres and music halls. Notoriously bad characters should be rigorously excluded from all places of public amusement. A better system of ventilating theatres should be adopted, and other improvements might be effected; as a consequence of which we think that we should see more of the great tragedies of Shakspeare, or the pure comedies of Sheridan, and less of those unmeaning farces and pitiful burlesques so much the rage in the present day; that in short we should at last truly realize the words of Disraeli, "The stage is a supplement to the pulpit, where virtue, according to Plato's sublime idea, moves our love and affection when made visible to the eye."

Above all, not only to women, but also to men, there should be thrown open a regular Educational career. In all schools and colleges liberal salaries should be clearly and definitely fixed in due proportion to the subjects taught and the social grade of the scholars. Men should teach boys, and women should teach girls. It may be asked where are the funds to come from? We reply from the following sources:—1st. The State should contribute where felt to be necessary. 2nd. Parents and Guardians should be made to provide for their children's education, as far as their resources allow them. 3rd. Misapplied endowments should be converted to a just

and proper use, and many of them should be set aside for educational purposes. The writer fully acquiesces in the principles laid down by Lord Lyttleton and others with regard to endowments, i.e. that, just as no one can tie up his private property for more than a life in being and 21 years after, so in the case of trust property the founder's will should not be a bar, after sixty years, to the property being applied in a way other than that intended by the founder, though his intention might be taken into consideration so far and no further as is consistent with the public good; that the real question is not what the founder thought many centuries ago, but what he would think were he living now when the conditions of society are so widely different.

The writer is in favour of well organized Ladies' Clubs, whether of a political character or otherwise, provided the hours for meeting were strictly limited so as not to interfere with domestic and other duties.

We will now conclude this part of the subject by modestly expressing our opinion that, if women were eligible for the professions enumerated, the world would be much happier and that justice would be done.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW FAR WOMEN SHOULD BE ADMITTED TO A SHARE IN LEGISLATION.

Hitherto we believe that the only plan suggested for giving to women a share of political privileges is simply that of conferring upon them the right of suffrage, i. e. of voting for men to sit in the House of Commons. We are positively astonished that eminent political thinkers should have evolved a measure so fearfully incomplete, and so full of objections which will be enumerated in their proper place. At the same time, however, we think that a grateful posterity will ever honour the names of those who in years gone by first advocated the cause of Women's Rights despite the compassionate smiles of the few or the ignorant jeers of the many. In bringing before the public a scheme for a Ladies' House, we do so humbly hoping that what we have written may catch the eye of some great statesman, and perhaps be thought not wholly unworthy of his attention, despite the fact that it emanates from one of the "unhonoured and unknown." Again, lest any should think this scheme wild and visionary, we would remind our readers that the relations between political philosophy and practical statesmanship should be most intimate. We confess we are not logicians enough to understand those who reason (?) that because a man has studied politics theoretically, that therefore he should be unpractical, in other words unfitted for taking a prominent part in legislation. We had always thought, that whatever may actually be the case, the man who aims at Parliament would be the better for some special political training, though at the same time we fully admit that the great majority of members would hardly have time or opportunity

for such an uncertain career. Again, if thought and action be inseparable, how much the more must philosophic thought precede right political action. The rebellion of the 17th century would never have taken place had not the speculative principles of the Renaissance and the Reformation taken deep root, nor would the bloodstained annals of the French revolution ever have darkened the pages of European history had it not been for those wild cravings after liberty and consequent abhorrence of monarchical despotism engendered by the writings of such men as Rousseau, Diderot, Morellet, and Voltaire. How true the sentiment of Bacon, that without philosophic ideas a man may be a dexterous intriguer but no statesman; hence it may be said that two things are requisite for right political action,—first, habits of philosophic reasoning from general principles and theories, and secondly experience, observation, and common sense for the application of those theories.

The Scheme then that we propose with diffidence, but by no means with timidity, is as follows :—

Clause 1.

That a Legislative Chamber be formed, containing the same number of female representatives as there are County Members in the House of Commons ; and that this Legislative Chamber be called the Ladies' House.

We should thus have a select assembly of 281 ladies, of whom 170 would represent the English, 64 the Irish, 32 the Scotch, and 15 the Welsh counties. We think that such an assembly as this necessarily (as will be shown later on) composed of clever and accomplished women would strengthen the aristocratic element in the Constitution; for if no measure were sent up for the royal assent until it had passed two out of the three chambers, there would be an end of that moral pressure which the Lower House now exerts over the House of Lords. As everyone knows the House of Lords was temporarily extinguished in the days of Charles I. It was

recalled on sufferance at the Restoration, and since that time it has been gradually tottering to its fall. It is now simply a revising assembly, with power to make comparatively trivial amendments on measures initiated in the House of Commons, and with the power itself to introduce measures of minor importance which run the risk of being pulled to pieces in the Lower House. How can we call the government of England a limited monarchy composed of three parts, Sovereign, Lords, and Commons, when practically only one branch of the Legislature rules the nation, or rather when, by the exclusion of women from politics, the country is being really governed by less than one-half of one of the three branches? Take for instance the Reform Bill of 1832. Though we cannot but admire the sound Liberal principles contained in those famous resolutions, yet from a Constitutional point of view we bitterly deplore the political necessity which obliged the Duke of Wellington and a hundred other Peers to absent themselves from the division so that the Bill might pass. We do not wish to be alarmists, but there really is some danger of realizing the truth of De Tocqueville's remarks on mixed governments, i.e. "that they must either pass through a revolution or fall into complete dissolution." What wonder that the Prime Minister of the day can by the aid of his majority do pretty nearly what he pleases, when *really* the Constitution is made up of only two parts, one of which contains the greater part of the Ministry the recognized leaders of the Opposition, together with nearly all the rising politicians of the day; while the other part, with a few most brilliant exceptions, is composed of Peers whose intellectual capabilities are just up to the average and no more? The one House is lively, vigorous, and combative; the other, except on great party nights, is sleepy and apathetic. In the one House, even on ordinary occasions a good speaker may get up and address a large assembly amidst a constant rattle of applause, whilst the other strongly reminds one of the fag end of uninteresting debates at the Oxford Union Society, when a few prosy

speakers get up and address themselves to still more listless auditors scattered here and there over the empty benches. We have said that practically the Constitution is only composed of two parts. Now far be it from us to cherish the slightest disloyalty to the Crown, but the student of Constitutional history knows well that, partly owing to the gradual substitution of cabinet for privy councils, at which latter the Sovereign used usually to preside in person, partly too owing to the broad distinctions of party that have sprung up since the accession of the house of Hanover, the real authority of the Sovereign has been gradually weakened. Without discussing the matter any further we must then accept as a fact that the House of Commons as represented by men really governs the United Kingdom. The question at issue is whether this is desirable or not. To this we give an unqualified negative. We wish to see all classes represented. We wish to see fresh blood infused into the House of Lords, and are thus in favour of a generous creation of life Peers, provided that a Ladies' House were also instituted, for otherwise the Minister of the day might be tempted to nominate a number of his own creatures in preference to others more deserving of the honour. We wish also that justice should be done to more than one half of the nation, and would impress upon our readers the fact that there being only one chamber of women to two of men, our great principle would be carried out, i.e. that though it is for many reasons desirable that women should not mix in politics anything like so freely as men, yet that their total exclusion from legislation is a consequence the very reverse of logical. Again, what wonder that the laws of our country press so heavily upon women when they have no voice in making those laws! We undertake to say the laws regulating married women's property, divorce, and so forth would in the course of a few years stand on a very different footing, even allowing for the fact that in accordance with our scheme, ladies would not have the power of initiating measures. Again, we think that women are naturally lovers of order and

averse to precipitate changes; and thus would co-operate with the House of Lords in checking too violent innovations, whilst at the same time their cleverness, tact, common sense, and generosity would lead them to countenance and support all schemes of truly Liberal reform. Prime Ministers would still be nominated by the Sovereign, according to the preponderance of Liberal or Conservative opinions; that is, if the House of Commons and the Ladies were Liberal, there would be a Liberal Ministry, but if for instance the House of Lords and the Ladies were Conservative, then the Sovereign would have to send for a Premier whose politics coincided with those of the majority of the nation.

Clause 2.

That the system of election and electoral qualifications be the same as those required in the case of county members, but that in all cases for electoral purposes the property of the husband be deemed also to belong to the wife.

Setting aside the legal question of married women's property, the principle contained in the latter part of this clause might very well be carried out. We think that a Ladies' House, to which the peeress and the commoner would under certain conditions be alike eligible, is, if we may venture to say so, a truly grand idea as combining both the popular and aristocratic elements of society which would work together in loving harmony for the good of the nation. Again, there would be no danger of this Chamber being chiefly composed of ladies of high rank, for as the ballot is almost sure to be introduced at the next elections, and perhaps the nomination system done away with, the influences of mere money, a landed estate, or even a noble name, though far from despicable, must yield the palm of honour to that far higher and grander ideal which the writer would fain believe we shall ere long quickly realize, i.e. an aristocracy of virtue and talent.

Clause 3.

That women alone may vote for women alone.

Our objections to simply admitting women to the suffrage are, 1st, that such a measure would be very incomplete. What is worth doing at all is worth doing thoroughly well. 2nd. Jealous feelings might arise, as for instance a single woman might vote for a man whom she thought best fitted for the honour of representing a constituency and yet all the while feel a greater affection for some one else who was standing for the same borough. 3rd. A married woman might sometimes feel it her duty to vote against her husband, and thus would often be placed in an awkward dilemma. 4th. If you simply give women the suffrage the probability is that they will some day clamour for admittance themselves, and thus we should have either to diminish the number of male representatives in the House of Commons or to increase them and allow men and women to sit together in a very large assembly. In the one case, it is hardly to be supposed that men would acquiesce in such a principle, and besides we should be doing just what we wish to avoid, i.e. altering rather than extending the ancient lines of the constitution. If we adopted the other alternative, the House of Commons would become a mere salon for flirtation and undue influences of all sorts. Further, the indiscriminate mixture of the sexes in a stormy political arena would detract from that pleasure we feel, when, quitting the busy hum of men, we seek for some sympathy in our woes, or encouragement once more with unflagging energy to stem the restless tide of life. Again, if a man and wife were both in the House and sitting on different sides how grotesque it would be to see the lady get up with scathing vituperation, and point the finger of scorn at the honourable gentleman on the benches opposite! Lastly, how expensive it would be to build a chamber capable of containing so many men and women! Whereas if a scheme similar to our own were adopted, the present House of Commons fitted up elegantly, though not luxuriously, would be admirably adapted for holding an

assembly of 281 ladies. Our readers will of course remember that a plan has been proposed this session for erecting a larger building for the House of Commons.

Clause 4.

That no woman, however good her property qualification, be allowed to give a vote, unless she produce a certificate of general intelligence from the Ladies' Committee controlling the school where she was educated.

Clause 5.

That no woman, however good her property qualification, be eligible as a candidate for the Ladies' House, unless she has taken a degree in Political Science at a college (cf. the 2nd chapter) or until she has passed an examination in the above subject.

Clause 6.

That this examination be conducted, where requisite, by a board of five Examiners paid by Government and selected by the Prime Minister for the time being from the House of Lords, the House of Commons, and the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin in equal proportions.

The obvious effect of these three last clauses would be that no woman would be enabled to take an active part in public life, or even to vote for others unless she had properly qualified herself for so doing. If it be objected, Why not extend the system to men also, we reply that without pledging ourselves to an opinion one way or the other, many members of the House of Commons have been or still are in one or other of the professions, and thus are in some way fitted for discussing the great questions of the day; though we still cling lovingly to the idea that a politician ought to have some special training.

Clause 7.

That every member of the Ladies' House be paid by Government a sum not less than £500 a year, but that the salaries of the first twenty ladies who sit on the front ministerial bench be fixed at some sum not less than £1,000 a year; that these twenty ladies be elected by that part of the Chamber which coincides with the views of the Government, whether Liberal or Conservative; that the election be by ballot.

Thus the salaries of members would only amount to about £150,000 a year, and when we take into consideration the enormous sums expended on keeping up our Army and Navy, and the fact that a million of money will be saved if Mr. Lowe's scheme for repealing the 1s. duty on corn be carried out, we cannot imagine any one grudging the expenditure of such a paltry sum in opening out to the most intellectual women of the land a splendid career, and infusing new vitality into our Constitution without altering the forms that at present exist. Again, we would exclude women from the Cabinet Council and all subordinate posts in the Ministry, so that we ought to give them compensation for such exclusion. Lastly, it must be remembered that the principle of paying members of Parliament would be by no means a novelty in Constitutional History.

Clause 8.

That the Ladies' House have only the power of accepting, rejecting, or otherwise modifying bills without the power of initiative.

It might be urged that when in the course of time women's political faculties were sufficiently matured, then we might give them full powers, but this policy would be ill-advised—1st, because, as often previously stated, we think it right that their political privileges should be limited, and that we should only damage our own cause if we claimed for them an absolute

equality in these matters; 2nd, because women are not strong enough to go through the vast amount of work that men do in the course of the session; 3rd, because they have other domestic and social duties to fulfil, duties which lie within their own peculiar sphere, and which we should be the last to wish to see neglected.

Clause 9.

That bills initiated in the House of Commons be sent up to the Ladies' House, and thence, whether accepted or rejected, to the House of Lords; that bills introduced in the House of Lords be sent first to the Ladies' House, and then, whether accepted or rejected, to the House of Commons.

Clause 10.

That all such bills as have passed the House where they were initiated go before the other two Houses in the order above mentioned; and that all bills thus passing two out of the three Houses shall be sent up to the Sovereign to receive the royal assent; that if the royal assent be graciously given such bills shall become law.

The effect of these clauses would be that in the one case the House of Lords might have to arbitrate between the other two Houses, whilst in the second instance the House of Commons might be the umpire; thus giving to that assembly more of a deliberative character in all matters of policy.

Clause 11.

That bills must be accepted, rejected, or altered by the Ladies' House within a month of their reception in that Chamber; and that all measures submitted to the Ladies' House and not settled within the month shall be deemed to have passed the Ladies' House.

Clause 12.

That the Ladies' Sittings be limited to four hours three times a week during the session.

This clause would allow our new representatives ample time for fulfilling their domestic and social duties, such as looking after their children, their parents, and their husbands, entertaining visitors at the afternoon tea conversazione, and so forth.

CLAUSE 13.

That no speeches exceed half-an-hour in length.

CLAUSE 14.

That the Ladies' House be superintended by a lady-president, who shall have in most respects the same privileges as the Speaker of the House of Commons, and whose salary shall be not less than £1000 a year.

CLAUSE 15.

That ladies of all ranks be alike eligible under certain conditions for seats in this Legislative Chamber.

CLAUSE 16.

That the institution of the Ladies' House produce no alteration in the numbers or system of election to the House of Commons as at present constituted.

Such is our scheme for a Ladies' House; and in conclusion we may add that we by no means wish all ladies to aspire to political eminence, only that those who have such tastes should have opportunities for developing them. We have in view more than one pattern of a true English lady whether elderly or young; and in short so high is the morality, so countless the attractions, and so vast the intellectual capabilities of womankind that it is possible to put before the mind's eye several ideal standards each differing one from the other. Lastly, we maintain that this is a subject which concerns us all—Liberals and Conservatives alike. That a freer and healthier, that a higher and nobler element should be infused into our constitution, that that sex whom we love and honour should be admitted to a share in the councils of this

great nation is no mere question of party; or, if it be, let the Conservatives for once, if never again, for this time only, consent to waive that cautious policy, to lay aside those retarding maxims which from the latter days of the Stuarts until now have formed the dominant part of their political creed. Let them reflect that now is the time to testify that they as well as we are at last aroused to a sense of the gross injustice, and the monstrous legal tyranny under which that nobler sex has groaned through every epoch of history ancient or modern. Let there be a thorough understanding between the chiefs of the two great political hosts, that once the 'Irish Church' and the 'Irish Land Tenure' wisely settled, the question of Woman's Rights shall be discussed fairly and fully with a generous enthusiasm and noble self-abnegation, tempered by moderation and wise self-restraint. Then let the leaders of the two parties act in concert one with the other, and, setting aside all political warfare, let the Liberal-Conservative unite with the Radical, and the Conservative-Liberal coalesce with the Ministerialist in passing a bill that will both set a splendid example to foreign nations, and that may well be called the great glory of the greatest country in the world.

VINCENT, PRINTER, OXFORD.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA
3 0112 047331316